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General Assembly

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12 December 1997

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

Fifty-second session
Agenda item 20 (e)

STRENGTHENING OF THE COORDINATION OF HUMANITARIAN AND DISASTER RELIEF ASSISTANCE OF THE UNITED NATIONS, INCLUDING SPECIAL ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE: PARTICIPATION OF VOLUNTEERS, "WHITE HELMETS", IN ACTIVITIES OF THE UNITED NATIONS IN THE FIELD OF HUMANITARIAN RELIEF, REHABILITATION AND TECHNICAL COOPERATION FOR DEVELOPMENT

Afghanistan, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Austria, Belgium, Bolivia, Brazil, Canada, Chile, China, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Denmark, Ecuador, El Salvador, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Hungary, India, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Kyrgyzstan, Lesotho, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Monaco, Morocco, Mozambique, Nicaragua, Norway, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Slovakia, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Trinidad and Tobago, Turkey, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America and Uruguay: revised draft resolution

Participation of volunteers, "White Helmets", in activities of the United Nations in the field of humanitarian relief, rehabilitation and technical cooperation for development

The General Assembly,

Reaffirming its resolutions 49/139 B of 20 December 1994 and 50/19 of 28 November 1995,

Reaffirming also its resolutions 46/182 of 19 December 1991, 47/168 of 22 December 1992, 48/57 of 14 December 1993, 49/139 A and B of 20 December 1994, 50/57 of 12 December 1995 and 51/194 of 17 December 1996 and Economic and Social Council resolutions 1995/56 of 28 July 1995 and 1996/33 of 25 July 1996,

Recognizing that the success of the international community in addressing the growing magnitude and complexity of natural disasters and other humanitarian emergencies depends not only on the formulation of a well-coordinated global response but also in the promotion of a smooth transition from relief to rehabilitation, reconstruction and development,

Bearing in mind that prevention, preparedness and contingency planning for emergencies at a global level depends, for the most part, on the strengthened local and national response capacities as well as on the availability of financial resources, both domestic and international,

1. Takes note of the report of the Secretary-General,[1] prepared in pursuance of its resolution 50/19, on the participation of volunteers, "White Helmets", in activities of the United Nations in the field of humanitarian relief, rehabilitation and technical cooperation for development;

2. Encourages voluntary national and regional actions aimed at making available to the United Nations system, through the United Nations Volunteers, national volunteer corps such as the White Helmets on a standby basis, in accordance with accepted United Nations procedures and practices, in order to provide specialized human and technical resources for emergency relief and rehabilitation;

3. Expresses its appreciation for the commendable progress of the White Helmets initiative as another voluntary international effort to provide the United Nations system with volunteer expertise to respond, in a quick and coordinated manner, to humanitarian relief, rehabilitation, reconstruction and development, while preserving the non-political, neutral and impartial character of humanitarian action;

4. Recognizes that White Helmets, as an operational partner of the United Nations Volunteers, is an efficient and viable mechanism for making pre-identified and trained homogenous teams available to the United Nations system, in support of immediate relief, rehabilitation, reconstruction and development activities, in the light of the increasing number and growing magnitude and complexity of natural disasters and other emergencies;

5. Calls upon States to promote the facilitation of cooperative actions between the United Nations system and the civil society, through national volunteer corps, in order to strengthen the United Nations capacities for early and effective response to humanitarian emergencies;

6. Encourages States to identify and support their respective national focal points for White Helmets in order to continue to provide the United Nations system with an accessible global network of rapid response facilities in case of humanitarian emergencies;

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[1] A/52/586.

7. Invites States and the United Nations system to consider ways and means to ensure the integration of the White Helmets initiative into their programme activities, particularly those related to humanitarian and disaster relief assistance;

8. Invites the Secretary-General to consider the potential use of White Helmets as a resource for preventing and mitigating the effects of emergencies and post-conflict humanitarian emergencies and, in this context, to maintain an adequate structure for the White Helmets liaison functions, taking into account the ongoing reforms process;

9. Requests the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its fifty-fourth session, under the item entitled "Strengthening of the coordination of humanitarian and disaster relief assistance of the United Nations, including special economic assistance", on the actions taken in line with present resolution.

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revised draft resolution

Participation of volunteers, "White Helmets", in activities of the United Nations in the field of humanitarian relief, rehabilitation and technical cooperation for development

Addendum

Add the following countries to the list of sponsors of the draft resolution:

Bulgaria, Comoros, Côte d'Ivoire, Jamaica, Kuwait and Netherlands

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